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LETTER DATED 8 JULY 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 17 to 30 June 1999.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Report to the Security Council on the operations of KFOR

1. The Security Council in its resolution 1244 (1999) requested the Secretary-General to provide reports at regular intervals on the implementation of the resolution, including reports from the leadership of the international military presence. This report on the operations of KFOR follows an initial report forwarded on 17 June and covers the period until 30 June 1999.

KFOR deployment

2. As at 30 June 1999, the total number of troops in Kosovo was 23,518. As KFOR deploys to full strength, significant changes in the size, composition and movement of forces are expected in the near future. During the reporting period, the only significant change in the size, composition or deployment, involving non-NATO KFOR countries, was from the Russian Federation, which moved a part of its battalion with the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina to Kosovo and has taken up positions in and around Pristina airfield.

Security

3. Although there has been a small number of incidents in which KFOR has come under fire, there is no evidence to suggest a deliberate policy of aggression towards KFOR. There have been many reported incidents of reprisal attacks by ethnic Albanians against Serbs and their property. KFOR is taking a firm line against these disturbances within its resources.

4. Of the hostile acts against KFOR, the most significant were:

- On 13 June, a policeman of the Ministry of the Interior Police advanced on KFOR personnel brandishing a pistol and fired a single shot. He was given six verbal warnings before being shot dead by KFOR troops.

- On 13 June, during a shooting incident in Prizren, a German soldier was shot in the arm. During the exchange of fire, a Serb civilian was shot dead and a second injured.

- On 25 June, the Ministry of the Interior Police headquarters building in Gnjilane was engaged by small arms fire. KFOR forces returned fire. One civilian was killed and 11 personnel detained. During the follow up, weapons were recovered.

- On 29 June, a patrol was investigating a disturbance between Serbs and Albanians when it was engaged by two gunmen. The patrol took cover and was engaged by a volley of automatic fire. A man then appeared in front of the patrol brandishing a pistol. A warning was given by the patrol, but he continued to threaten them. Three members of the patrol fired at the gunman, fatally wounding him.

- On 29 June, two patrols were engaged by a burst of automatic fire in Lipljane. A man appeared in front of the patrol brandishing a pistol and threatening the patrol. A verbal warning was given but he did not comply. He was shot and mortally wounded.

5. Many incidents of intimidation, looting, arson and other crimes, including murder, have been reported. Further evidence has also emerged of mass graves. Among the more significant occurrences were:

- On 13 June, two journalists were shot by the Yugoslav Army. One died instantly and the other later in hospital.

- On 14 June, KFOR discovered 20 bodies in a burned house near Prizren.

- On 16 June, the Grand Hotel in Pristina, used as headquarters by the Yugoslav Army, was set on fire.

- On 16 June, two persons in Yugoslav Army uniforms were shot dead south of Obilic.

- On 19 June, at Gnilanje, a sniper killed one civilian and wounded three others. He was captured by United States forces.

- On 20 June, a mass grave was identified south-west of Dakovica, containing an estimated 87 bodies.

- On 20 June, a lawyer reported five alleged war crime sites with an estimated 100 corpses. These have not yet been checked by representatives of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

- On 21 June, 10 Serb tanks, 5 jeeps and 5 trucks were reported within the 5-kilometre ground safety zone, north-east of Gnjilane, in violation of the military technical agreement. The vehicles and troops were withdrawn following contacts between KFOR headquarters and Yugoslav Army headquarters.

- On 21 June, over 100 FARK soldiers crossing into Kosovo from Albania were disarmed by German forces at the border.

- On 21 June, eight armed members of UCK faced a stand-off in Prizren with 200 FARK. KFOR intervened and confiscated all weapons.

- On 23 June, a mass grave was identified 10 kilometres west of Pec, containing 200 bodies.

- On 24 June, a shooting incident was reported in Pristina outside the university hospital. Three Serbs arrived at the hospital, one of them injured. One of the Serbs drew a pistol and started firing within the emergency ward. A doctor was injured and all the Serbs were detained. The injured Serb later died.

- One 25 June, in Lipljan, Fatmiri Gerimi, a senior leader in the Ministry of the Interior Police, was arrested. He is an ethnic Albanian who is alleged to be involved in the killing of 50 people.

- On 25 June, a mass grave was reported near Pec by a member of UCK, which is believed to contain 68 bodies.

- On 28 June, a disturbance was reported in Lipljane, where a crowd of 200 to 300 people had congregated. After being provoked by gunfire, the crowd rioted and Serb buildings and cars were targeted. Quick reaction forces were deployed and rapidly brought the situation under control.

- On 28 June, German forces reported a disturbance in Orahovac. Shots were fired, and a civilian suffered a gunshot wound and was taken to Prizren hospital by helicopter. The dead civilian was confirmed as a local Serb. A second civilian may have been involved in the shooting.

- On 30 June, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia reported that, during a helicopter reconnaissance, about 100 bodies were seen lying in a street of Celine, and that a further 50 bodies were also seen in a village nearby.

- The International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia informed KFOR headquarters that they had found more than 80 individual graves around Celine. Villagers reported to German KFOR forces that the massacre had occurred on 15 April 1999.

6. Major casualties involving KFOR forces include:

- On 17 June, an Italian armoured vehicle was damaged by a mine near Klina.

- On 18 June, a light-armoured reconnaissance vehicle of the French Framework Brigade was damaged by an anti-tank mine.

- On 18 June, a Saxon wheeled vehicle rolled off a bridge, some six kilometres south of Lipljan. Three soldiers were injured.

- On the afternoon of 21 June, following a request from UCK to clear bomblets some 18 kilometres east of Pristina, two United Kingdom engineers were killed when the bomblets exploded. Two members of UCK were also killed and one injured in the same incident.

- On the evening of 24 June, an Italian soldier died at the university hospital in Pristina after discharging his weapon accidentally.

- On 29 June, a German Marder armoured vehicle was involved in an accident and a soldier was badly injured.

Compliance

7. Serb security forces have complied with the terms of the military technical agreement. There is, however, an unconfirmed report that some elements of the Ministry of the Interior Police may have remained in Serb areas to monitor the situation.

8. KFOR has monitored UCK compliance with resolution 1244 (1999) by showing intensive presence on the ground in order to enforce the undertaking of demilitarization and transformation by UCK and gathering the weapons of UCK members. There were encouraging results from the increase of efforts to hand over weapons. Uniformed members of UCK have virtually disappeared from the streets. Tension has reduced accordingly. Approximately 3,700 members of UCK have reported to the assembly areas to date. However, most of the 576 weapons turned in by UCK are old and worn. There were no reports of UCK members either armed or in uniform outside their assembly areas. The exception was the attendance of 30 of them, unarmed, wearing uniforms at a miliary funeral in the village of Klecka where an armed group of five UCK members provided a firing party. This was coordinated in advance and authorized by KFOR headquarters. Five members of the KFOR forces monitored the event from a distance.

Cooperation with the civil implementation presence

9. KFOR briefs all international and non-governmental organizations twice daily on security matters, including road and mine information. The international and non-governmental organizations have received sufficient assets to run their own programmes and do not require further direct support from KFOR. At the brigade and battalion level humanitarian assistance is increasing, especially focusing on distribution of food, medical support and the re-establishment of support services. Brigades have conducted an assessment of those isolated communities within their area of responsibility in need of urgent humanitarian aid.

10. Around 70 persons have been detained by KFOR. Some have been released while others have been arrested. It is envisaged that all detainees will be grouped in existing detention facilities. A legal board has now been appointed, comprising four local and three international judges.

11. A United Nations police team (39 officers of the International Police Task Force from Bosnia and Herzegovina) was deployed to Kosovo on 24 June. Initial liaison has been established with KFOR. Efforts are being made by national civil and military cooperation capabilities in every sector to restore emergency services (fire brigade, hospital in Pec and Prizren). Two mine awareness teams from the non-governmental organization HELP have started daily mine awareness activities for refugees remaining in the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia.

12. KFOR continues to provide a secure environment and is establishing coordination mechanisms with the United Nations Interim Adminstration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Its civil and military cooperation capabilities are expected to increase substantially by mid-July.